

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 161616Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8894

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 7389

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, AR

SUBJECT: SOVIET-ARGENTINE RELATIONS: PERON PROVES PROMISING.

REF: A. MOSCOW 68888; B. MOSCOW 7007; C. MOSCOW 7175

1. SUMMARY. RESULTS OF ARGENTINE DELEGATION'S MOSCOW VISIT INDICATE SOVIETS HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING TANGIBLE LONG-TERM TIES WITH BUENOS AIRES. WHILE ARGENTINE RESPONSE TO SOVIET OFFERS OF EXPANDED AID, ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND TRADE WILL BE CRITICAL FACTOR IN DETERMINING RESULTS OF SOVIET ADVANCES TOWARD ARGENTINA, BOTH SIDES ARE PROCLAIMING A NEW ERA IN SOVIET-ARGENTINE RELATIONS. EXPANSION OF SOVIET-ARGENTINE TIES, ASIDE FROM POTENTIAL DIRECT BILATERAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS, APPEARS TO OFFER SOVIETS
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OPPORTUNITY TO DIVERSIFY THEIR LATIN AMERICAN INFLUENCE AND

DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE FOLLOW-UP TO BREZHNEV'S CUBA TRIP. WE EXPECT SOVIETS TO MAKE STRONG EFFORT TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM THEY HAVE ACHIEVED IN IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REPORTED REFTELS SOVIETS LAID ON RED-CARPET TREATMENT FOR ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT DELEGATION LED BY ECONOMIC MINISTER GELBARD. WHILE VISIT'S ADVANCE BILLING INDICATED THIS WOULD BE GET-ACQUAINTED SESSION FOR ARGENTINES TO MEET SOVIET COUNTERPARTS AND PUT FLESH ON BONES OF AGREEMENTS SIGNED IN BUENOS AIRES IN FEBRUARY, FROM OUTSET SOVIETS TURNED IT INTO MAJOR POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC EVENT.

3. GELBARD, WHOM SOVIET PRESS BILLED FIRST AS PERON'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND ONLY SECONDLY AS MINISTER OF ECONOMY, WAS RECEIVED BY TOP SOVIET LEADERSHIP (BREZHNEV, PODGORNYY, AND KOSYGIN). HE APPARENTLY FOUND DOORS OF BUREAUCRACY OPEN, AND DELEGATION MET SYMPATHETIC MEDIA COVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE VISIT. COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING VISIT (REF. B) SUGGESTS GELBARD ALSO FOUND SOVIETS GENEROUS IN OFFERING FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS EAGER TO DISCUSS EXPANSION OF SOVIET-ARGENTINE TRADE.

4. SOVIETS FOR THEIR PART ARE PROBABLY WELL SATISFIED WITH EARLY RETURNS ON THEIR INVESTMENT. THEY APPEAR TO HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THEIR INITIATIVE TO CEMENT BONDS WITH ARGENTINA. VISIT PRODUCED ARGENTINE AGREEMENT TO EXPAND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN SEVERAL AREAS AND TO MOVE QUICKLY ON IMPLEMENTING ACCORDS SIGNED IN FEBRUARY AND DURING VISIT. ARGENTINES SIGNED EXPRESS COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE WITH THE SOVIETS ON A LONG-TERM BASIS (A KIND OF LEGALISTIC PLEDGE SOVIETS APPEAR TO COVET). AS REPORTED REF C THEY ALSO GOT BUENOS AIRES TO ACCEPT A CEMA CONNECTION. AND FINALLY, SOVIETS CAN NOW EXPECT PERON'S MOSCOW VISIT TO PLACE SUMMIT STAMP OF APPROVAL ON RELATIONS WHICH SOVIET-ARGENTINE COMMUNIQUE SAYS HAVE REACHED A "QUALITATIVELY NEW STAGE."

5. IN TERMS OF BROADER SOVIET CONCERNS IN LA, RESULTS OF THE VISIT ALSO APPEAR TO BE POSITIVE. SOVIETS WILL WELCOME OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY EXPANDED TIES WITH ARGENTINA TO

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DIVERSITY THEIR INFLUENCE IN LATIN AMERICA. AFTER CHILEAN DEBACLE AND REVERSE FOR LEFTISTS IN URUGUAY, EMERGENCE OF ARGENTINE TIES MAY PROVIDE WELCOME SUPPORT FOR SOVIET VIEW THAT, DESPITE REVERSES, "PEACE PROGRAM" CAN STILL YIELD RESULTS IN LATIN AMERICA. MORE SPECIFICALLY, THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-ARGENTINE COOPERATION ALONG WITH BUENOS AIRES' MOVEMENT TOWARD RAPPROACHMENT WITH HAVANA MAY ALSO BE SEEN AS A POSITIVE FOLLOW-UP TO BREZHNEV'S CUBA

VISIT AND AS SUPPORT FOR SOVIET POSITION THAT DETENTE BENEFITS
THIRD WORLD.

6. WHETHER THE LONG-TERM RETURN ON THE SOVIET INVESTMENT WILL
PRODUCE THE POSITIVE RESULTS ANTICIPATED BY THE SOVIET PRESS, OF
COURSE, REMAINS TO BE SEEN. WE CANNOT JUDGE HOW FAR THE
ARGENTINES ARE WILLING TO GO WITH MOSCOW. AND THERE IS SOME
INDICATION (E.G. REPEATED COMMUNIQUE REFERENCES TO MOVEMENT
AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME) THAT THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES MAY
BE UNCERTAIN ABOUT THEIR LONG TERM PROSPECTS, PERHAPS INDICATING
THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN DEAL WITH PERON BUT PLACE NO BETS ON
HIS SUCCESSOR. FOR THE TIME BEING, HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS GIVE
EVERY INDICATION OF MOVING EXPEDITIOUSLY TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR
GAINS, AND, AS THEY SAY, TO MAKE THE TREND TOWARD IMPROVED
SOVIET-ARGENTINE RELATIONS IRREVERSIBLE. WE EXPECT MOSCOW
WILL PRESS ON WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF ALREADY CONCLUDED AGREE-
MENTS AND WILL SEEK EARLY CONCLUSIONS TO THOSE STILL UNDER
NEGOTIATION.
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